



Memorandum

NOV - 5 2002

To: Director, Bureau of Land Management,
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service,
Director, National Park Service
Deputy Commission - Indian Affairs
Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director – USDA FS

From: Nina Hatfield, Deputy Assistant Secretary - Budget and Fiscal Resource
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tom Mills, Deputy Chief, Business Operations
U.S. Forest Service

Subject: **Using Contracting and Assistance to Support the National Fire Plan**

The purpose of this memorandum is to reiterate the need for an increased use of contracting to implement the National Fire Plan. The Department of the Interior and the Forest Service are striving to accomplish efficient methods of contracting which will provide for collaborative efforts by all Wildland Fire Management (WFM) agencies.

Immediate and specific action is required:

- Expend funds appropriately during periods of continuing resolutions:

Both the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior have issued letters to their respective staffs addressing contracting early in the fiscal year. As soon as the agency has an appropriation act or continuing resolution, money is available to implement a planned program of work, to the extent that one can reasonably expect to be funded.

- Initiate immediate interagency collaboration:
 - Re-activate the Interagency Contract and Assistance Strategy Team. New members, representing each of the land management agencies, have been identified. This strategy team will formalize a charter, including roles and responsibilities of the team, while working to accomplish the actions required by the January 2001 joint Forest Service / DOI NFP Contracting and Assistance Policy memorandum.
 - Complete identification of Contracting / Assistance and Fuels Leads, for all FY 2003 NFP fuels projects, by November 15, 2002. To the extent

possible, the assigned workload for a geographical area shall be balanced among the participating agencies without regard to which agency actually manages the lead, i.e., the contracting officer need not be an employee of the agency overseeing the treatment. If there is a need for an adjustment to reflect varying agency contracting workloads between agencies, that will be developed at the national level.

- Provide for reciprocal use of all NFP contracts by all of the WFM agencies.
- Do not charge administrative fees for other WFM agencies placing orders against NFP contracts within the geographic area.
- Existing contracts that do not provide for ordering by other NFP agencies or that require administrative fees for placing orders are to be modified to correct these deficiencies and promote better inter-agency cooperation and contracting efficiency by no later than November 30, 2002.
- Identifying additional projects for contracting / search for qualified, local, small vendors:
 - DOI's goal is to contract for 50% of all approved project funding for fuels treatment and emergency stabilization, rehabilitation and restoration work by FY 2004.
 - USDA Forest Service's goal is to contract 50% of approved project funding for mechanical treatments and 20% of approved project funding for prescribed burn, including preparation and monitoring, by fiscal year 2005.
 - It is critical that contracting / assistance managers and Fuels Management Specialists collaborate among agencies to identify and pursue additional projects for contracting and assistance.
 - Contracting / assistance and fuels managers must coordinate with the DOI and USDA Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization and bureau / service counterparts to ensure that small, local vendors/entities are identified and matched to contracting / assistance opportunities.
 - Assistance in accessing NFPORS and will be provided to facilitate work with local resource, fire and procurement managers to match projects and qualified vendors.

To ensure that this communication is most effectively implemented, it should be distributed to all levels of managers and specialists with responsibilities for implementing

the NFP fuels treatment and emergency stabilization, rehabilitation and restoration programs and to all members of your supporting contracting teams.

cc: **USDA and DOI OSDBU Directors**
 Deputy Regional Foresters for Business Operations - USDA FS
 Assistant Director for Administration - BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA
 Bureau / Service Fire Directors
 Bureau / Service Procurement Chiefs
 Deputy Chief for State & Private Forestry – USDA FS